









Newsletter

Issue 12 - Spring 2019

Hello & Welcome to the Spring 2019 edition of Marine Litter Watch

by Gillian Kinnier, Marine and Fisheries Division, DAERA

Welcome to the return of Marine Litter Watch with the Spring 19 edition. I should begin by introducing myself as a new member of the Marine Strategy and Licensing Team. A massive thank you to everyone who has contributed by sending articles, news and updates to get me started. It has been a great help. Our cover image was provided by https://www.flickr.com/ people/50838842@N06. I would also welcome all ideas for future articles and updates. Please email them to me at Gillian.kinnier@daera-ni.gov.uk and keep them coming!

Article Summary

Our first article is by Dr Susann Power, lecturer at The Ulster University. Susann details how new research explores beliefs about littering on beaches.

Our next article by Simon Boyle, Delamont Country Park manager relays the story of the two minute beach clean board at Newcastle.

Sophie Rodgers a policy officer from **DEFRA**, gives an insight into working with Commonwealth partners in our article.

Finally, looking at some of the ways in which Ards and North Down Council are tackling environmental issues is an article from **Stephen Addy from the** council.

DAERA Marine and Fisheries Update

Saving the Salmon - International Year of the Salmon 2019

"Our impacts on Salmon have reached a critical point – it's time to build resilience for salmon and people"

Salmon numbers have declined significantly across the Northern Hemisphere. This is due to a combination of environmental change and human impacts putting this culturally and commercially important fish at risk. International

Year of the Salmon 2019 is a Northern Hemisphere wide initiative. It aims to raise awareness and promote research through outreach events, education programmes and research. It continues until 2022. It is an initiative of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) and the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC). It includes their member countries and covers all salmon species.

DAERA Inland Fisheries will be using



the International Year of the Salmon as a focus for many of its outreach events and research programmes over the next four years, a highlight being the Salmon and Whiskey Festival at Bushmills on the 8th and 9th June 2019. The Bushmills International Salmon Station will be open to visitors

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with a variety of displays and activities scheduled. Throughout 2019 and onto 2022 DAERA Inland Fisheries will be bringing related events to locations across Northern Ireland. We will be working closely with salmon scientists from the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI). We are also working with the Lough's Agency and voluntary groups to understand decline in salmon population. The aim is to help with habitat enhancement and other measures that might reverse that decline.

The International Year of the Salmon encourages local projects to be run by concerned organisations or individuals who want to make a difference. These projects and events can be viewed on the website http://yearofthesalmon.org. Support for events may also be available from the DAERA Inland Fisheries outreach team. Please contact the team for further information at anglingcorrespondence@daera-ni. gov.uk

Ban on microbeads update

The Environmental Protection (Microbeads) Regulations (Northern Ireland) became effective from 11 March2019. The Regulations make it an offence to manufacture or supply rinse-off cosmetic products containing plastic microbeads. The legislation will be enforced by council Environmental Protection staff.

Three New Bathing Waters at Cloughey, Kilclief and Ballyhornan join the list of identified sites

Three New Bathing Waters at Cloughey, Kilclief and Ballyhornan join the list of identified sites In 2018 three new bathing waters at Cloughey, Kilclief and Ballyhornan were added to the list of officially identified bathing waters. This addition makes a total of 26 sites around our coastline. This means that the Department monitors the water quality at these bathing waters and provides the public with information during the bathing season, 1 June to 15th September.

Ards and North Down Borough
Council are responsible for providing
the public with information during
the bathing season in the vicinity of
the Cloughey bathing water, and for
the removal of waste where necessary
for Cloughey. Newry, Mourne and
Down District Council provide similar
services at Kilclief and Ballyhornan.

Marine Litter Lighthouse

Marine litter has been used for art installations over the world. Clara Alvarez Alonso from DAERA Marine and Fisheries Division took this picture of a lighthouse made from fishing

nets and other debris in Bergen, Norway. Inside was a box from Kilkeel.



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EU plan to ban Single Use Plastics

According to the European Commission, more than 80% of marine litter is plastic. The slow break up of plastic means that it is accumulating in seas, oceans and on beaches. Residue is found in marine species including fish and shellfish, and therefore in the human food chain.

A provisional agreement between the European Parliament and Council in December 2018 announced the intention to ban:

Plastic cutlery, plates, straws, cotton bud sticks balloon sticks, food containers and expanded polystyrene cups.

The draft Directive also provides for:

 a reinforced application of the polluter pays principle through the introduction of extended producer responsibility (EPR)

- a EPR regime for fishing gear.
- a 90% collection target for plastic bottles by 2029
- a 25% target for recycled content in plastic bottles by 2025 and 30% by 2030 and



 mandatory labelling on the negative environmental impact of the careless disposal of items such as cigarettes with filters, wet wipes and sanitary products.

To see the full press release go to http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20181219IPR22301/parliament-and-council-agreedrastic-cuts-to-plastic-pollution-of-environment

British-Irish Council (BIC) Marine Litter Symposium, Glasgow, Scotland 22 February 2019

The BIC Symposium on Marine Litter was held in February in conjunction with Scotland's International Marine Conference 2019.

The International Marine Conference delivered thoughtprovoking breakout sessions on a wide range of topics. These included: - biologically diverse seas, climate change, microplastic and pre-production plastics (nurdles).

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A young person's workshop was also held.

Discussions from the conference were then considered at the BIC symposium. Ministers considered the following 3 areas.

- the circular economy, particularly regarding the fisheries industry and recycling systems for end of life fishing nets and ropes;
- knowledge sharing and potential pilots to address the issue of preproduction plastic pellets (nurdles) emissions through work with industry and audited supply chain approaches;
- education on marine litter including both schools and professional (fisheries) education.

Following the press conference with publication of the agreed communiqué the Ministers left the delegates to take part in highly engaging workshops on these topics. A copy of the communique is available from the BIC Website.

Fine to Flush – a major new development in the fight against fatbergs

Fatbergs – mainly caused by a build-up of wet wipes, fats, oils and grease into a solid mass – have been increasing in frequency in recent years. Following a Water UK press release on 11 January manufacturers of wipes will be able to feature an official water industry 'Fine to Flush' symbol on their packaging if they



pass strict scientific tests. This symbol will let consumers know that the products don't contain plastic and will break down instead of clogging up

sewers and contributing to fatbergs which cause blockages and sewage overflows.

The fashion industry and sustainable seas.

The Environmental Audit Committee currently have two inquiries open, one into the sustainability of the fashion industry which investigates the social and environmental impact of disposable "fast fashion" and the wider clothing industry. The second is on sustainable seas inquiring on the future of the sea and how marine life can be protected.

Full details of these inquiries including submissions and video evidence are available at:

https://www.parliament. uk/business/committees/ committees-a-z/commons-select/ environmental-audit-committee/

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Update on Scotland's plans to ban plastic cotton buds

In the last newsletter we reported the Scottish Governments announcement

that they intended to ban plastic cotton buds. This was followed with a public consultation in the summer. The government published the consultation response on 30 July. 97% of respondents supported the proposal to legislate against plastic stemmed cotton buds. They cited reasons such as environmental protection, alternatives are available and circular economy.

It is anticipated that the legislation will come into force by summer 2019.

Rathlin Extreme Beach Clean

During summer 2018, a team led by Ulster Wildlife, supported by the Northern Ireland Environment Support Team and Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust took on the challenge of clearing the litter from



the western shore of Rathlin Island from Mill Bay to Rue Point. Two visits and 7 hours of hard labour produced a massive heap of rubbish including 38 wrecked lobster pots, 25-30 sacks of plastic litter, 7 car tyres, 3 tractor tyres, a car bumper and lots of fishing floats & old rope.

Thanks to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Rathlin Boat Trips and to the Rathlin Development & Community Association for all their work in making this a success. Watch this space for beach cleans in 2019.

Northern Ireland Environment Support Team are a group of unsupported volunteers led by Rachael Conway and Donna Rainey who do lots of litter picks. Thanks to them for giving up their spare time. Have a look at their Facebook page to see what they are up to.



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New research explores beliefs about littering on beaches by Dr Susann Power, University of Ulster

Contact: <u>s.power@ulster.ac.uk</u>

To better understand the underlying causes of the ongoing litter challenge, a new research project has recently been launched by Ulster University to explore norms, values and beliefs around littering on beaches in Northern Ireland.

Importance of beaches to tourism

Beaches play an important part for domestic tourism in Northern Ireland, with 23% of trips equating to a day out at the beach. The quality of a beach, and particularly its cleanliness and water quality, are key factors for choosing a beach.

Costs of littering

Research has shown that up to 97% of the economic value of a beach can be lost due to lower standards of cleanliness. According to environmental charity Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, street cleansing is already costing us £43m per year, while beach litter costs £6m per

annum to the NI economy. In addition, the charity reports that in 2017, 473 items of litter could be found for every 100m stretch of beach. That's nearly 5 items of litter for each step we take! Granted, a lot of litter is washed up from the sea, but, much of the litter we see at our beaches is a result of our own behaviour.

73 litter every A recent su rly attitudes ha ake! people clair

A recent survey about littering attitudes has revealed that 74% of people claim to never litter. However, only one in two people think that it is actually bad behaviour to drop a small piece of litter. Effective litter management on beaches is therefore essential to the competitiveness of the country's tourism industry.

74% of people claim to never



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New research explores beliefs about littering on beaches continued

Contact: s.power@ulster.ac.uk

Why do litter levels remain high?

When costs of littering on beaches are so excessive – to the environment. to our personal experience and the country's economy – then why are litter levels still so persistently high? Existing campaigns to engage the public in reducing litter have focused on awareness raising, benefits of less litter and developing a sense of civic pride. 'Live Here Love Here', www.liveherelovehere.org is an excellent example of one such campaign.

The focus needs to remain on changing behaviour.

Littering as a consequence of deep rooted causes

This new study doesn't look at littering as a form of behaviour, but as a consequence of deeper-rooted causes, that should be the target of behaviour change campaigns. Researchers from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management at Ulster University are carrying out this research to gain insight into

the questions of how people really feel about litter on beaches. The research is currently being carried out. Preliminary results highlight the need for a renewed focus on individual responsibility and a principle-based tourism policy for an otherwise hedonistic activity. Generational conflicts have also emerged as problematic in the cultivation of environmental norms. Storytelling around littering is used as a form of sense-making. Furthermore, tourism policy planners could benefit from reviewing family leisure activities in a bid to improve local environmental quality, cultivating environmental norms and improving the local coastal tourism product.

The research serves as a precursor to a larger study aimed at designing and testing interventions to reduce littering on beaches in Northern Ireland. For more information, please contact Dr Susann Power at s.power@ ulster.ac.uk or @DrSusannPower1

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The adventures of our #2 Minute Beach Clean Board by Simon Boyle, Delamont Country

Contact: simon.boyle@downdc.gov.uk

Looking at the map for #2 minute beach cleaning boards along the coast of the UK and Ireland, I noticed a large gap in provision of the boards between Newcastle, Co Down and Portrush, Co Antrim.

So, I thought to myself that we in Northern Ireland, must have the cleanest beaches in the British Isles as we don't need many the boards! Unfortunately, the reality is that the Marine Litter Survey paints a different Park, Newry, Mourne and Down Council

picture of litter on our beaches.

Our #2 Minute Beach Clean Board

Truth be told the 2 minute beach cleaning board at Newcastle ended up in the sea! But, it was rescued and

is now recuperating on Tyrella beach and during the summer months it has a team of carers. In Tyrella it has attracted at least one hundred volunteers both voung and old. These volunteers spend an average of thirty minutes cleaning the beach of all litter.

Our board doesn't enjoy having a picture taken so we had to rely on the team and board at Carlingford for their photo. To see the board at Tyrella you will have to visit and maybe do a 2 minute beach clean whilst you are there.



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The adventures of our Two Minute Beach Clean Board continued

Contact: simon.boyle@downdc.gov.uk

2018 Season

With such a demand for its services our Board agreed to come back to Tyrella for the 2018 season. Volunteers concentrated on plastics and our board showed how much plastic was collected during the season. Our team at Newry Mourne and Down District Council also helped our volunteers to ensure that they didn't pick up anything that could be harmful. As consumers in today's society it can be difficult to understand the ramifications of our habits when it comes to waste. When we throw something away there is no 'away', rubbish doesn't disappear.

Every bit helps

We know that Beach Litter Cleans do make a significant difference. By removing even one plastic knife or fork or any type of plastic we are saving it and perhaps also a sea animal from an extremely slow death A plastic knife or fork does not biodegrade but breaks down to smaller

particles that strangle sea birds or end up as food for our majestic great whales and sea turtles. While we think we are too small as an Island to make a difference the combined actions of mankind can be powerful.

The extent of the problem

To help visualise the extent of the problem of marine litter, I recommend you watch the BBC's Blue Planet programme or carryout an internet search for dirty beaches and waterways worldwide to see the extent of the problem.

Working together

Finally for the #2 Minute Boards to work, they needed to be supervised. When we all come together as a community we have the power to make a difference. It's time to change society's mindset. There is no "throwaway"! It's time to think of the repercussions of the damage done to our marine environment by allowing plastics to enter our waterways, time

to clean up and ask ourselves, how are we going to revert the damage already done to our oceans.

For more information on these boards go to https://beachclean.net/boards



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Working with Commonwealth partners by Sophie Rogers, Defra, Policy Officer

Contact: Sophie.rogers@defra.gov.uk

In April 2018, the UK hosted the biannual Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, with leaders from member countries gathering in London and Windsor. There were four key themes on the agenda: fairness, prosperity, security and sustainability. Oceans were high on the sustainability agenda. With a vast and global Commonwealth marine estate, working with Commonwealth partners offers a huge opportunity to act collectively to protect the marine environment and create a lasting legacy.

Ocean-themed events

In the lead up to the meeting Defra organised a number of ocean-themed events at the Natural History Museum, National Oceanography Centre and aboard the Research Vessel Cefas Endeavour, Defra also announced a consultation on a deposit return scheme, signed up to the Coral Reef Life Declaration and launched

the 'Our Commonwealth Ocean' education pack for children across the Commonwealth. The pack is aimed at teachers to guide lesson planning for

11-14 year olds and is available free online: https://www.tes.com/teachingresource/our-commonwealth-oceanteacher-s-pack-defra-11876515#



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Working with Commonwealth partners continued

Contact: Sophie.rogers@defra.gov.uk

Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance

During the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting the Prime Minister announced the formation of the Commonwealth Clean Ocean Alliance (CCOA). The CCOA, led by the UK and Vanuatu, calls on its members to eliminate all avoidable single use plastic waste. This may be to significantly reduce single-use plastic carrier bags or ban the sale and manufacture of microbeads in personal care products. As well as the UK and Vanuatu, over 20 other countries have signed up to the CCOA so far.

Official Development Assistance to address marine plastic pollution

The ambitions of the Commonwealth Clean Ocean Alliance are supported by a package of up to £61.4m of UK aid to stop plastic pollution from entering the ocean. This includes a Technical Assistance Facility of up to £10m and £6m to develop marine litter action plans. £25million has been committed to help to address the scourge of marine plastic waste from the scientific, technical, economic and social perspectives. A £2.4m investment in the Global

Plastics Action Partnership has been made. £20million will also be available to prevent plastic and other environmental pollution from manufacturing in developing countries. £3m will be available for waste pilots in four countries. The CCOA places a strong emphasis on knowledge sharing and capacity building. In addition to funding, the UK has committed to sharing technical and legislative expertise. It is through measures like these that Defra will work with devolved administrations and Commonwealth partners to protect the marine environment and create a lasting legacy.

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Ards and North Down Borough Council leads the way by Stephen Addy

Contact: stephen.addy@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Notice of Motion

In November 2017 the Council agreed to reduce the use of plastics at meetings and events through providing recyclable, reusable alternatives.

What they did...

The Council did this by using reusable and or recyclable alternatives at meetings. Furthermore, in a groundbreaking programme, the Council delivered an Environmental Education Programme (C.L.E.A.R.) to 1,800 year eight pupils from across the Borough. This covered a number of environmental themes including the issues around single-use plastics. It was very well received by the pupils and teachers alike.

Signing a pledge

The second part of this interactive programme asked the children to sign a pledge along with their family to be more environmentally friendly and aware. The Council provided a bursary



to schools for an environmental project with the level of funding dependent on the number of pledges received. This scheme is funded through the Council's Recycling

Community Investment Fund. This fund has been generated through savings made due to the increased level of recycling and subsequent reduced landfill tax liability.

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Ards and North Down Borough Council leads the way by Stephen Addy

Contact: stephen.addy@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

Sea Bins

By 2050 it is anticipated that there will be more plastic in our seas than fish. This plastic is killing our wildlife and entering our food chain.

As a Borough with 110 miles of coastline that draws tourists as a result of its waterways, harbours and marinas, the introduction of the seabins will help in the fight against the eight million pieces of plastic that find their way into our oceans daily, making the sea a cleaner and safer place for residents and local marine wildlife.

The first sea bin designed to trap marine plastics was installed in Northern Ireland in November 2018 by Ards and Down Borough Council. Situated in Bangor it is anticipated the equipment can sieve two million litres of sea water a year. It moves up and down with the tide collecting all floating rubbish. Water passes through



the bin, trapping debris in the mesh catch bag which is then disposed of properly. The sea bin can catch an estimated 1.5 Kgs of floating debris per day including micro-plastics up to 2 mm diameter.

Seabins are the brainchild of two Australian surfers, Pete Ceglinski and Andrew Turton, To date over 200 bins are in currently in operation globally.

To purchase a seabin visit http:// seabinproject.com/the-product/

Link to the Councils website https://www.ardsandnorthdown. gov.uk/resident/bins-and-recycling/ stand-for-sustainability

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For further information on the work of the DAERA Marine and Fisheries Division, or to submit an article for inclusion in the Marine Litter Watch Newsletter, please contact Gillian Kinnier.

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